The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accurate and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and federal fields, and acquires other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 28, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1622 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MAY 12, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 19

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

A sure sign that labor's enemies are being routed on all fronts is discernible in an editorial in the Scripps-Howard newspapers which makes the following admission:

"In our own business, the mechanical departments of most newspapers have operated amicably under the closed shop, through Government duress, even during years when organized labor was by no means on the upgrade."

The editorial takes the United States Chamber of Commerce to task for advocating at its last convention that the closed shop, wherever it exists, should be outlawed.

Such a stand, the editorial states, is a grave tactical error. It calls the Chamber of Commerce "fanatic" on this subject. It suggests the proper strategy would be to seek legislation forbidding extension of the closed shop during the war.

Well, our opinion is that the Chamber of Commerce is at least honest in its opposition to labor whereas the Scripps Howard papers are merely hypocritical.

If the closed shop has operated well in the mechanical departments of the newspapers, as the Scripps-Howard editorial admits, why shouldn't it be extended to other industries?

If the closed shop has resulted in amicable labor relations in the newspaper industry, why isn't it a safe assumption that it will bring similar beneficial results in other fields?

More Good News

The editorial accuses the Chamber of Commerce of trying to "make hay" during the nation's greatest crisis, but it forcefully charges unions which seek to extend the closed shop with the same tactics.

There is no comparison. The facts are that the necessities of war are compelling trade unions in this country to suspend and restrict their activities in behalf of workers. Under the circumstances, it is only fair that these organizations be assured of some measure of security to prevent unprincipled groups like the United States Chamber of Commerce from destroying them.

Even the employer members of the War Labor Board are coming around to this sensible, practical point of view.

When the Scripps-Howard newspapers slap the U. S. Chamber of Commerce over the wrist and chide employers for waging an outright war on the closed shop, they are admitting tacitly that the fight against union security is lost.

While we were giving three cheers for this development, we found some more good news in Samuel Grafton's column in the Philadelphia Record. He says the Saturday Evening Post, now under new editorship, has an editorial praising labor's heroes. It hadn't noticed it. If true, it certainly is a new departure for that publication. Mr. Grafton continues:

"And reporters, making a 24-day tour of the country's factories under the guidance of the National Association of Manufacturers, are talking about the heroic army of labor.' It seems that once the reporters entered the factory gates they discovered thousands of Americans to be working hard. The revelation seems to have knocked some of them over."

It's about time!

The Truth Will Out

A similar recognition of labor's feats on the production front comes to us in an article in last Sunday's New York Times written by Louis Stark. He says:

"It has long been an axiom in industry that if the creative impulse of those who man the nation's machines could be harnessed the result would be an enormous increase of production.

"The nation is now witnessing the release of these creative energies on an unprecedented scale."

Never were truer words spoken. But how long has labor waited to hear them spoken! If this truth had been brought home to the American people long ago, when it was evident to anyone who wanted to take the trouble to look, the nasty anti-labor campaign through which we have just passed never could have got started.

The American people are fair. They would no more want to harrass and hinder the nation's production soldiers than they would want to place obstacles in the path of our armed soldiers and sailors.

But they were fed oodles of false and vicious propaganda. Evil forces spread the word that labor was lying down on the job, that American workers were loafing, that they were trying to squeeze the last cent out of industry and the Government, that unions were blocking and delaying war production.

Such rot was not widely believed. But it was sufficiently believed to concentrate all its energies in recent months to nail the lies that did survive. It was a tough fight, but a successful one, not because we were able to contend with the false propaganda to any extent but because it was largely disseminated, but because the truth finally prevails. We are happy, indeed, that it is now being more widely recognized and acknowledged.

Labor Press Praised By U. S. Leaders For Support of Nation's War Effort

New York City.—Editors of the labor press in the east pledged themselves and their publications to help America win the "psychological war" against the Axis Powers at a conference sponsored here by the War Production Board.

Representatives of the various information agencies of the United States Government gave the labor press unstinted praise for their patriotic policies and for their support of the nation's war effort.

At the opening session in the morning, the editors were addressed by Andrew J. Biemiller, of the War Production Board; Dr. A. H. Feller, Deputy Director of the Office of Facts and Figures, and Robert W. Horton, Director of the Information Division of Treasury Office of Emergency Management.

Mr. Horton assailed the unfairness of the daily press in its treatment of labor news, while Dr. Feller urged the labor press to take the offensive against Hitlerism and Fascism in a psychological war against the propaganda machine of the Axis.

During an evening question period, the Navy Department was severely criticized as the only Federal agency which has failed to supply legitimate information to the labor press to help build up the morale of American workers.

A series of round-table discussions on the various problems confronting editors occupied the afternoon session and the meeting concluded with a dinner at which William H. Davis, chairman of the National War Labor Board, gave an informal, off-the-record talk.

Among the comments of editors that the conference served a highly constructive purpose in establishing closer contacts between the Government's informational services and the labor press and also in opening the way for closer collaboration between the Government and the labor press in spreading the gospel of democratic America's aims and policies in the war.

Among the tributes paid to the labor press by high Government dignitaries was a telegram from Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau which said:

"We at the Treasury Department know how useful labor publications can be. For many months your papers and magazines have helped us to carry on a nationwide campaign in behalf of war savings and for this we are deeply grateful. In the coming months, I know I can count on all labor editors to do their utmost on the home front until victory is won."

NEW WAR POSTERS NOW AVAILABLE

Washington, D. C.—June 14 has been proclaimed by the President as Flag Day. In his proclamation, the President stressed the fact that, at this time of war, "we as a nation are not fighting alone; we are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the united peoples of the United Nations," all of them dedicated to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, all of them pledged to fight on till the Axis is destroyed. The President urged that on our traditional Flag Day "we honor not only our own colors, but also the flags of those who have signed with us the Declaration of United Nations." Now, more than ever before, should we take means to show their recognition that we are not alone in this fight, but that ranged alongside us are twenty-five other peoples fighting for freedom.

A poster has been prepared which shows in full color the flags of the twenty-six United Nations against a background of the Statue of Liberty, captioned "The United States Fights for Freedom." You can cooperate in this year's special observance of Flag Day by distributing as many of these posters as possible for display at that time and through the summer. Posters may be obtained in two sizes, 14x10 and 28x20, by writing to the Office of Facts and Figures, Washington, D. C.

CURRIER UNION BOLTS CIO; AFFILIATES WITH THE AFL

Detroit, Mich.—CIO union employees of the Currier Lumber Co. have voted to affiliate with the AFL, their union president announced, ending a controversy that flared into a national issue last fall.

Burley Kistner, president of the Currier local of the United Construction Workers Organizing Committee (CIO), said that "general dissatisfaction with the service given by the CIO United Construction Workers," caused the change.

LABOR FOR VICTORY!

Tune In On May 16 Broadcast For Biggest News Story In Years

Washington, D. C.—One of the biggest labor news stories in years is likely to break on the next "Labor For Victory" radio program conducted by the American Federation of Labor on May 16.

Don't miss it! The program will be carried by a nation-wide NBC network at 10:15 p.m., Eastern War Time.

Details will be held a close secret until the moment the broadcast goes on the air. Precautions have been taken against leaks so that the dramatic impact of this news event may reach the American public as it actually happens.

We urge all of you to make a date with your radio for Saturday night, May 16, because every person in the United States will be affected by what takes place.

Wage Bonus Bill For State Employes Signed by Gov. Lehman of New York

Albany, N. Y.—Gov. Lehman signed a bill giving a flat $100 bonus to 15,000 State employes receiving less than $1,500 a year. The increase is for this year only, and is designed to meet a rise in the cost of living for the State's lowest-paid employes—those working in mental hygiene, health and correctional institutions.

Effective next year, all 20,000 employes in the Departments of Mental Hygiene, Correction, Health and Public Welfare will be under the Feld-Hamilton mandatory salary increment law, as the result of legislation passed at the session just ended and already signed by the Governor. Pending the benefits of the Feld-Hamilton law, it was decided to accord a bonus to the lowest-paid employes.

In signing the bonus bill, the Governor said:

"Even now, we are greatly handicapped in securing and retaining satisfactory personnel in the institutions of the State. I think, therefore, it is essential that the low and inadequate salaries of many of the employes in the institutions be increased, both as a matter of justice, and in order to attract and keep workers in the service of the institutions."

The Governor also approved the Ives bill increasing unemployment insurance benefits. He noted that more men are being laid off from jobs because of the effect of war on our domestic economy. The nature of New York's commerce and industry requires a greater economic sacrifice than elsewhere, the Governor declared.

Under the Ives bill maximum unemployment insurance benefits are increased from $15 to $18 a week, the waiting period is cut from three to two weeks, and the duration of payments is extended from thirteen to twenty weeks.

10 Detroit Crafts Get Higher Pay By WPB Arbitration Board Award

Washington, D. C.—In the first decision made since President Roosevelt announced his wage stabilization policy, a board of arbitration set up by the War Production Board granted increases to ten of the twenty-four crafts belonging to the Detroit Building Trades Council, and denied increases to the other fourteen.

The board of review of WPB's labor production division said the arbitration board's decision was unanimous. It is effective as of May 7 to May 1, 1943.

All of the unions had asked for increases but agreed to arbitration in line with the agreement between the government and the A. F. of L. Building Trades Council, under which all war construction strikes were forbidden with all disputes to be settled by arbitration.

The board of arbitration said the increases were granted because the ten crafts' wages seemed to be out of line with others.

The highest increase granted, 12½ cents an hour, went to brush painters and reinforced steel workers, in each case bringing their hourly rates up to $1.50, the amount requested.

"Two things stand out in these wage determinations," the board said, "(1) the highest scales of wages have not been changed and (2) the principal changes have been in the lower levels where the rise in the cost of living (whatever it is) bears a relatively greater ratio to the income received than in the higher levels.

"Some attention has been given by the board to narrowing down the differentials between the workers in the trades possessing relatively equal skills."

The members of the board of arbitration were John P. Coyne, president of the Building and Construction Trades Department of the A. F. of L.; Major James T. O'Connell, chief of the labor relations branch of the Corps of Army Engineers; and Louis E. Comstock, chairman of the WPB's Labor Production Division's Board of Review.

Rights Of Shop Chairman Upheld In Luggage Workers Union Case

Chicago, Ill.—An important decision sustaining the rights of shop chairmen to exercise their functions without disciplinary action by employers was made by Judge Harold P. O'Connell, impartial chairman, in a case involving the shop chairman in the plant of the Acme Leather Company, Chicago, which, under Local No. 50, International Ladies Handbag, Pocketbook and Luggage Workers Union, AFL affiliate, has an agreement.

It has long been the contention of the union that the shop chairman is employed in a dual capacity as an employe and as the spokesman for fellow employes and cannot be discharged for acting in that capacity, the decision upheld the union's contention.

The dispute was initiated by the summary action of one of the firm's partners, who also acts as foreman, in reprimanding the shop chairman for failing to attend employes while working and then discharging the shop chairman for alleged intemperate language used during the dispute. The union appealed the case to Impartial Chairman O'Connell, who ruled that the discharge of the shop chairman "was without just cause," and ordered that he be "immediately reinstated with back pay."

"There is no doubt," Judge O'Connell said, "that a shop chairman does act in a dual capacity, namely, as a worker and as a representative of the other members of the union in his particular shop, and he must be enabled to feel free to speak for and act in behalf of the other members of the union without jeopardizing or in any way endangering his own position as a worker, and the employer must recognize that the shop chairman does occupy such a dual position."

"If in my opinion," Judge O'Connell concluded, "that in cases involving discipline of shop chairmen the charges should be filed before the Impartial Chairman before the employer resorts to the summary action of discharge except in aggravated cases that will not permit of delay."

WOMEN'S AUXILIARIES TO HOLD CONVENTION

Washington, D. C.—T. M. Ornburn, secretary-treasurer of the Union Label Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, announced that arrangements have been completed for the second convention of the American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries of Labor which will be held on June 19, at the Hotel Statler, Detroit.

Official notices have been sent to national, international, state, central, and local women's auxiliaries to elect delegates to this convention.

"This is the most important convention of women ever held in America," said Mr. Ornburn, "and it is more important in war time because women are not only engaged in civilian war activities but they are actually taking the place of men in industry. It is vitally necessary that women become organized in order to become familiar with the benefits of women's auxiliaries as well as labor unions, which, we hope, they will join as soon as they are drawn into actual work in industry. American labor standards can be maintained only by the active support of women as well as men in this great emergency."

10 PER CENT WAGE BOOST WON BY AFL BRUSHMAKERS

New York, N. Y.—A. Varrone, business manager of Brushmakers Union Local 14503, AFL affiliate, announced that I. A. Bubis, president of Rubco Manufacturers, Inc., had signed an agreement with the union granting a pay increase of ten per cent to all employes payable in United States war bonds.

News Briefs

RECOGNIZE FREE ITALIAN MOVEMENT, GREEN URGES

New York City.—William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, recommended that the Free Italian movement receive the same recognition as is extended to the Free French and other similar causes.

Mr. Green's position was made known in a message read by Luigi Antonini, president of the Italian-American Labor Council, at a meeting of the council at the offices of the Italian Dressmakers Union, 218 West Fortieth Street. The council is made up of AFL and CIO unions, with a combined membership of 250,000 in the metropolitan area.

"There are many thousands of Italian-born people in the United States who hold the point of view you have repeatedly expressed in opposition to Mussolini and fascism," Mr. Green wrote Mr. Antonini. "No one acquainted with you or with the free Italian movement can justifiably designate you or those associated with you as enemy aliens."

ARBITRATION ASSOCIATION ELECTS WOLL AS DIRECTOR

New York, N. Y.—Matthew Woll, Second Vice President of the American Federation of Labor, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the American Arbitration Association, it was announced by Lewis M. Isaacs, chairman of the association. Commenting on Mr. Woll's election to the board, Mr. Eastman stated:

"I consider Mr. Woll's election to the Board of Directors of the American Arbitration Association a most important step in the development of the voluntary arbitration of management-labor controversies during this war period. As a member of the board, he will be particularly helpful in guiding the policies of our Industrial Arbitration Tribunals strengthout the nation and in making the voluntary arbitration of disputes—both commercial and industrial—a method of insuring the continued flow of war material to our armed forces and to those of the United Nations during this life and death struggle."

AFL TEXTILE UNION WINS WAGE INCREASE CONTRACTS

New York, N. Y.—Joseph Sylvia, president of the Federation of Woolen and Worsted Workers of America, affiliated with the United Textile Workers of America, AFL, and Arthur Lenhardt, vice president of the Federation of Labor, announced that contracts had been signed with the United Piece Dye Works of Lodi, New Jersey, and the Stoughton Garnetting Corporation of Stoughton, Mass., providing for an increase of 5 cents per hour for those one week's vacation with pay, ten holidays with pay per year, double guaranteed pay when an employe has worked five hours.

The agreements also provide for the union shop, normal forces and that seniority rights in the future are preferred to the United States Department of Labor for arbitration.

STEELMAN PUNCTURES LIE ABOUT WORK STOPPAGES

Atlantic City, N. J.—Labor's and management's pledge of full cooperation and continuous production "has been 99.97% successful," John R. Steelman, head of the U. S. conciliation service, told the convention of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

"Careless recital of the dramatic kick of strikes in the press and on the screen and over the radio has given too many people the impression that our war effort is being held up by a serious way because of willful strike in a major part of American industry," he said. "The truth is that it preserves the purpose of the Axis but brings a good end among us," Dr. Steelman said.

LABOR-EDITOR RE-ELECTED TO BOARD OF EDUCATION

Springfield, Ill.—At the annual election for members of the Board of Education in Springfield, Thomas Seaver of the Springfield Federation of Labor and editor of the Illinois Tradesman, was re-elected for another three year term after having served twenty-eight years as a member of the board.

The Springfield Federation of Labor had endorsed him for re-election and no campaign was made to further his election. Mr. Woodmansee did not even rent his office in the campaign and did not run any advertising in any of the newspapers, not even in his own, the Tradesman.

FLORE JOINS LABOR BOARD OF LIQUOR INDUSTRIES

New York, N. Y.—Edward Flore, general president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employes International Alliance and Bartenders International League of America, has joined the labor advisory board of Allied Liquor Industries, Thomas F. McCarthy, president of the industry organization, announced.

Mr. Flore, whose organization speaks for 350,000 members, will serve on Allied's labor advisory board with other American Federation of Labor officials already on the board.

AFL Executive Council Meets To Decide Vital War Policies

Members Cheered by Production Gains and Absence of Strikes As Green Opens Sessions

Washington, D. C.—Members of the AFL Executive Council gathered here for one of their most important sessions in history, fully determined to vote any sacrifices necessary to help America win the war.

President William Green was prepared to submit to the Council highly encouraging reports on the successful enforcement of the AFL no-strike policy and on the constructive efforts of affiliated unions to speed up and increase war production.

Also high up on the list of agenda was the consideration of anti-labor legislation. President Green plans to tell the Council in detail of the victorious campaign carried on by the AFL and its Legislative Committee against the enactment of vicious measures which would have outlawed the closed shop, abolished the 40-hour week standard and destroyed the democratic freedoms of American workers.

Sir Walter Citrine, secretary of the British Trades Union Congress, arrived in this country by clipper to place before the Council a proposal for a war-time alliance of the Anglo-Soviet-American trade union movements.

In the past the American Federation of Labor has successfully fought the proposed admission of the Soviet union movement into such bodies as the International Federation of Trade Unions on the ground that it is dominated by the Government and is not a free, democratic trade union organization.

The Executive Council will review the status of the war in general and express its views on the war aims and peace terms of American workers.

It will also survey the entire subject of war taxes and give special consideration to the latest proposal of the Treasury Department to lower personal exemptions in income taxes, thereby placing the heavier burden on those in the lower brackets who are least able to afford to pay taxes.

The policies which will guide the nation's manpower mobilization program will be studied by the Council and it is expected that some declaration may be made for the guidance of this program on practical lines.

The Council will unquestionably do its utmost to rally the membership of the AFL behind the War Bond drive. The AFL already has pledged itself to see to it that its members and unions purchase a billion dollars worth of these bonds by the end of the year and President Green has urged all members to place themselves on payroll allotment plans, assigning ten per cent of their weekly pay for War Bond purchases.

Many other weighty matters relating to America's war effort will come before the Council, which is charged with guiding the policy of the Federation between conventions.

In addition, the Council will chart organization and administrative plans for the next quarter.

AFL Maritime Unions Win Right To Maintain Contracts During War

Washington, D. C.—The Seafarer's International Union won a notable victory when the War Shipping Administration agreed to a statement of policy respecting the collective bargaining rights and union contracts of maritime labor for the duration of the war.

The S. I. U. led the successful fight against the proposed list of regulations which, the union charged, would have smashed all maritime union contracts and the unions themselves. This set of regulations was considered especially dangerous since the War Shipping Administration has now requisitioned all merchant ships.

The S. I. U., together with the Seafarers' International Union of North America Firemen, Oilers and Watertenders, formed a united front against the proposed regulations.

Their opposition forced the abandonment of the War Shipping Administration's proposed rules and, finally, capitulation to the union demands that existing contracts between labor and shipowners be underwritten by the Government for the duration of the war.

Not only did the AFL unions have to fight the shipowners on this issue, but the Communist-controlled maritime union affiliated with the CIO. The latter, according to S. I. U. President Harry Lundeberg, was ready to sacrifice the interests of maritime workers out of patriotism—to Soviet Russia.

Taylor Says Closed Shop Enemies Seek Permanent Shackles For Labor

Scranton, Pa.—Addressing the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor at the annual convention here, Dr. George W. Taylor, vice chairman of the National War Labor Board, declared that the "enemies of labor" are trying to capitalize on the "closed shop" issue to "shelve workers' rights for the duration of the war" and keep labor shackled forever after.

"Such plans to shelve collective bargaining and organized labor have been frequently camouflaged by suggestions to freeze union status," Dr. Taylor asserted. "The hope of labor's enemies, of course, is that such freezing would render organized labor inert and helpless."

The educator added that "if the War Labor Act were on the statute books we would have to do what labor and industry and the government did in 1918—we would have to invent it."

"We have to do this for one reason and one reason alone—in order to win the war," he said. "If the workers were not organized in our war factories, we would have to do everything we could to create that organization."

Dr. Taylor contended the War Labor Board would be "faithless to its sacred trust" if it did not "take steps to protect trade unions from disintegration during the war."

This protection has taken the form of board decisions directing leading employers to sign contracts under which those of their workers who voluntarily joined unions would be obliged to remain members during the life of the agreements.

"With this protection a union can be freed from the necessity of carrying on the eternal battle to preserve its very existence against attacks from within or without," Dr. Taylor contended.

"It can be free to devote all its energies to the job of licking Hitler and the Japanese war lords."

All Unions In Cincinnati Unite On Program For Victorious War

Cincinnati, Ohio. — The AFL, CIO and railroad brotherhoods in this city have united on a victory program.

The steering committee is headed by Phil Ziegler, general secretary, Brotherhood of Railway Clerks (AFL); Jack Hurst, president, AFL Central Labor Council; and Robert J. Davidson, regional CIO director. The program includes:

1. To allow nothing to interfere with the production of munitions of war.

2. To take the initiative to organize joint management-labor production councils.

3. Political action to remove from office representatives who are enemies of labor.

4. To organize joint mass meetings and other means to counter the vicious anti-labor propaganda.

5. While vigorously prosecuting the war, to plan for post-war expansion to prevent an economic collapse.

UAW-AFL WINS VOTE AT MOTORS PLANT

Meriden, Conn. — The UAW-AFL won a National Labor Relations Board election at the New Departure Division of the General Motors Corporation here by a majority of 500 votes. The vote was: For the UAW-AFL 2,535; for the UAW-CIO 2,034; no union 441; challenged ballots 84; void ballots 9. The New Departure plant has been under contract to the UAW-AFL for several years.